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ABSTRACT

This study examines several genres of Nuyorican literature (works by and about Puerto Ricans in New York) in an effort to demonstrate how authors interpret the political and social contexts of their environment. Works analyzed are the dramas "Short Eyes" and "The Sun Always Shines for the Cool" by Miguel Pinero and "Noo Jork" and "The FM Safe" by Jaime Carrero; an autobiography, "Nobody's Hero," by Lefty Barretto; a novel, "In Nuevo York," by Nicholas Mohr; and a collection of poetry, "La Carreta Made a U-Turn," by Tato Laviera. The authors interpret the New York milieu in the five boroughs but with primary emphasis on El Barrio. The political statements of Nuyorican literature are revealed as being critical of the manner in which the United States government creates situations which make people dependent, stifle growth, and aid in individual destruction through crime, poverty, drugs, and a lack of self worth and morality. The major social themes addressed include New York City and its impact on individuals, the barrio experience, and a critical attitude toward Anglo society. The writers all express displeasure with their society. They are unanimous in their portrayal of a human condition in desperate need of improvement. (Author/MK)

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Social and Political Concerns in Nuyorican Literature

by Marvin A. Lewis

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Abstract

The present study examines several genres of Nuyorican literature in an effort to demonstrate how authors interpret the political and social contexts of their environment. Works analyzed are: Short Eyes (1974) and The Sun Always Shines for the Cool (1977), dramas by Miguel Piñero; Noo Jork (1972) and The FM Safe (1979), dramas by Jaime Carrero; Nobody's Hero (1976), an autobiography by Lefty Barretto; In Nueva York (1977), a novel by Nicholasa Mohr; and La Carreta Made A U-Turn (1979), poetry by Tato Laviera. These authors interpret the New York urban milieu in the five boroughs but with primary emphasis on El Barrio.

The political implications of Nuyorican literature are revealed not so much through an overt criticism of the political status of Nuyoricans but rather the manner in which the United States government creates situations which make people dependent, stifle growth, and aid in individual destruction through crime, poverty, drugs, and the lack of self worth and morality. The political statement is therefore more implicit instead of being an outward manifestation of protest.

The major social themes discussed in this survey include, New York and its impact upon individuals; the barrio experience; and a critical attitude toward Anglo society. To a person, the writers express extreme displeasure with the society of which they form a part. They are unanimous in their portrayal of a human condition in desperate need of improvement.

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONCERNS IN NUYORICAN LITERATURE

According to the latest demographic figures, approximately 1.7 million persons of Puerto Rican birth or parentage live on the United States mainland with the greatest majority residing in New York. A reliable source, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, makes the following observation concerning this population:

> The earliest Puerto Rican migrants had settled in the East Harlem sector of Manhattan, which came to be known as El Barrio. In 1940 about 70 percent of New York's 61,000 Puerto Ricans lived in Manhattan. But the migrants soon began to fan out to the city's other four boroughs. By 1970, El Barrio was still an important Puerto Rican enclave, but the thrust of movement was elsewhere. The Manhattanites comprised only 23 percent of the city's 811,000 Puerto Ricans. By then, the Bronx was the largest Puerto Rican borough (39 percent of the population), followed by Brooklyn (with 33 percent). The outlying boroughs of Queens and Richmond were the homes of 5 percent of the city's Puerto Ricans.[1]

The same document describes the conditions of the majority of Puerto Ricans in the United States as being far from ideal, concluding that "based on such key indices as income, education, unemployment, and incidence of poverty, Puerto Ricans on the United States mainland are a severly disadvantaged minority group."[2] The Commission then sets forth a list of recommendations designed to alleviate some of the inequities inherent in the Puerto Rican situation in the United States. This document outlines the necessity for more progress in the areas of jobs, housing, schooling, medical care, and other basic human services. The findings represent a plea for help in breaking the cycles of poverty, miseducation, and discrimination experienced by Puerto Ricans.

Economically, Puerto Ricans are the most disadvantaged of Hispanic minorities. According to a recent survey,[3] 27.8 percent of Puerto Ricans within the United

States continental limits live in a federally defined state of poverty with an income of less than $5,500 a year for a family of four. This compares with 24 percent of Mexican Americans and 16.4 percent of other Hispanics. The study also reveals that Puerto Ricans have the highest percentage of unemployed high school graduates and the highest percentage of unemployed men between the ages of 25 and 44. It is to be expected then that these conditions are of prime interest to creative writers.

Nuyorican literature, or works by and about Puerto Ricans in New York, as an interpretation of reality thematically demonstrates concerns for the social, political, and economic status of this segment of the United States population. The Jones Act of 1917 and the creation of the Free Associated State in 1952 are viewed by the writers as political decisions which are responsible, to a large degree, for the current social status of the Puerto Rican community in the United States. Since the Island is judged by many as a colony of the United States, large numbers of Puerto Ricans on the mainland and in Puerto Rico share the same economic fate as their disadvantaged minority counterparts in the United States.

The political implications of Nuyorican literature are revealed not so much through an overt criticism of the political status of Nuyoricans but rather by the manner in which the United States government creates situations which make people dependent, stifle growth, and aid in individual destruction through crime, poverty, drugs, and a lack of self worth and morality. The political statement is, perhaps, more implicit rather than an outward manifestation of protest. This study examines some of the social and political concerns of writers from a wide spectrum of the Nuyorican experience. The major themes discussed in the study include, New York and its impact upon individuals; the barrio experience; and a critical attitude toward Anglo society.

Recent scholarly attention to Nuyorican literature has been in the form of both articles and dissertations. The most complete treatment of this topic is available in a study by Faythe Elaine Turner, entitled "Puerto Rican Writers on the Mainland: The Neoricans: A Thematic Study."[4] Turner discusses the social, historical, and cultural backgrounds of Nuyoricans and comments upon important literary figures such as Piri Thomas, Victor Hernández Cruz, Lefty Barreto, and Miguel Piñero. In a related article, "The Emigrant and New York City: A Consideration of Four Puerto Rican Writers," John C. Miller analyzes the fiction of both Island and Mainland writers including José Luis González, Pedro Juan Soto, Emilio Díaz Valcárcel and Nicholasa Mohr. Miller is not solely concerned about writers who live in New York but with themes common to the two experiences.

The present study examines several genres of Nuyorican literature in an effort to demonstrate how authors interpret the political and social contexts of their environment. Works analyzed are: Short Eyes (1974) and The Sun Always Shines for the Cool (1977), dramas by Miguel Piñero; Noo Jork (1972) and The FM Safe (1979), an autobiography by Lefty Barretto; In Nueva York (1977), a novel by Nicholasa Mohr; and La Carreta Made a U-Turn (1979), poetry by Tato Laviera. These works interpret the New York urban milieu in the five boroughs but with primary emphasis on El Barrio.

A. Jaime Carrero

Noo Jork, the first play to consider, is a two-act drama which examines the social contexts of poverty and the creation of the welfare state. It centers around the problems of Gladys, a young dancer from Puerto Rico, and her struggle to maintain her artistic and creative impulse as well as a sense of history and tradition in New York. She fails. Juxtaposed are the four Ramóns, males who have mastered the system of public aid and who have retired from productive lives,

except for making babies, at an early age. Their reply to a policeman's question concerning responsibility is:

> R. No. 3: We're unique in the history of New York.
> R. No. 4: We've deciphered the welfare code.
> R. No. 1: We can now have two wife-babies: one in Brooklyn, another in the Bronx.
> R. No. 2: We've mastermined the computer: we can have the whole family on the roll call.[5]

Along with modern technology, which is this case is an abject failure in dealing with people, comes the support systems - "social workers, social psychologists, curriculum designers for deprived areas, image makers and experts in minority groups. . .". The "experts" view Puerto Ricans as being neither inventive, nor skillful, nor effective or practical, nor imaginative, nor clever. But they do drink, have parades, are conspicuous consumers, frequent pawn shops, provide work for demographers and bureaucrats, and keep sociologists and psychologists busy. What emerges from the first several pages, in spite of the mordant humor, is a picture of a group of people whose lives are monopolized by modern technology and who are the constant objects of scientific and not too scientific study.

The plot line of Noo Jork evolves around the annual Puerto Rican Day Parade down Fifth Avenue. It is a media event from which politicians profit while the majority of people gain nothing. Tino, another of the play's main characters, is a voice for change who does not view the Nuyorican situation in a positive light. He remarks: "We owe our ass to every five-and-ten in the whole city. We so special that our own IQ is MADE IN JAPAN!"[6] The Ramóns are pointed out by Tino as lacking in ambition because the society rewards them for being unmotivated. Even harsher criticism is leveled against Tino's own uncle, the Grand Marshal, who is told by his nephew that "you are the kind of Puerto Rican that moves to Jersey because you are white and while in Jersey you tell other white

Puerto Ricans that you are Italian until you mention your spicky name."[7] Both Tino and Gladys are energizers who do not accept the social order in its present form. Tino's most crucial observation is that "in this environment nothing grows."[8] Needless to say, Evil triumphs over Good. In the last scene of the play, Gladys is brutally violated by the four Ramóns as the parade passes by.

Noo Jork is a view of barrio life which fosters the violence, brutality, crime, and corruption associated with people without hope. Nuyoricans are presented with their stereotypes, manner of speech, and identity problems intact and exaggerated in a farcical sort of way. The dehumanization, degeneration, and lack of respect evident in the work suggest a type of environmental determinism which controls the destinies of the citizens in question.

The FM Safe continues Carrero's preoccupation with the dehumanizing impact of New York upon people. The play concerns the lives of Vidal, a liquor store owner, his wife, Marcelina, and their relationships with other members of the community who include the Professor, an intellectual alcoholic, and Fernando, a gang leader, and his cohorts. Fear and distrust characterize Vidal's interactions with others since he is more or less trapped in his liquor store to prevent theft and robbery. In fact the title, The FM Safe, refers to the "safe" manner in which Marcelina transports money to the bank in her panty hose.

Marcelina longs to return to Puerto Rico because of fear of what the New York environment is doing to their personal and social lives. In fact she has planned a trip to Puerto Rico, a fact which is discovered by Vidal during the play's climax. From Marcelina's perspective, hate has become the overriding emotion in their daily lives. She expresses these sentiments in forceful language:

> And one quarter here and another quarter there makes up a lot of hate, Vidal, HATE! Jesus, why can't we be more civilized? Tell me man - just a little help here and there - that's what I ask. Is that too much to ask? Everybody around here acts like a poverty pimp. And baby, you're not different. This business is hate; your gun is hate; Fernando is hate; la Sombra is hate. . ."[9]

Vidal is slowly becoming a reflection of the worst that society has to offer by forgetting basic human values. The FM Safe raises questions concerning machismo and masculine inadequacies as Vidal outwardly manifests his prowess through a fighting cock dubbed "Macho," a pistol, and his Marine uniform. These artifacts, in reality, cover Vidal's real cowardice. In the final confrontation all of the superficial symbols of manhood are stripped away by Fernando and his cohorts, "the Radios," and Vidal is forced to confront them as a man, which he does successfully. When Vidal is forced to fight for his dignity and his family he then realizes that human values are more important than money.

In both Noo Jork and The FM Safe, violence, alcohol, and drugs are the ingredients that make life miserable for many people. Combined with an insensitivity that is inherent in the social fabric, these factors make life a constant struggle for Carrero's protagonists.

B. Miguel Piñero

Miguel Piñero's works alternate between two poles of Nuyorican existence - prison and the barrio. His view of the human condition is not unlike that of Jaime Carrero in that degradation and dehumanization are the key issues. Short Eyes assesses a day in the House of Detention concentrating upon the dynamics of inter-ethnic group relations. A cross section of the inmate population is presented with Blacks, Nuyoricans and Whites in evidence with all of their stereotypic behavior intact. Among primary characters present are El Raheem, the black Muslim; Longshoe, the tough White; Cupcakes, the Puerto Rican sex object; and Nett, the prison guard.

The first of the play's two scenes presents typical daily interactions and Clark Davis, the accused child molester, or "short eyes" is introduced into the

prison setting. Davis is a middle class white man who apparently was placed erroneously in that particular cell block because of administrative bungling. Regardless of whether he committed a crime or whether he was encarcerated by mistake, Davis is tried by the other prisoners, found guilty and executed. After the error is discovered, a sense of collective guilt is momentarily shared by some but then Paco, one of the inmates, remarks:

> Oye, y qué? What difference does it make? I took part? I saw him guilty. I feel nothing, mistake, it happens, eso pasa. Someday I'll be in the streets walking, minding my own business, and then boom-boom, I'll be shot down by a police, who will say it's a mistake, I accept it as part of my destino. . .Sí, es mi destino morir en la calle como un perro. . .[10]

Davis is presented as a scapegoat because he is a member of a guilty society. His death is not an important event from the other prisoners' points of view. Paco attests to that fact. Death is a normal occurrence since in the jailhouse setting not much value is placed on human existence. Rather the focus is upon violence as manifested in both verbal abuse and physical confrontations in jail. These factors are related to the preoccupation with sex since repressed libido is foremost in the prisoners' minds. For individuals such as Paco, Longshoe, and El Raheem, who are trapped in the cycle of poverty and crime, the outside does not offer much of a future, hence the large numbers of repeaters. Short Eyes, therfore, presents desperate men in a closed environment bereft of most of the human dimension.

Some of the end results of prison life are dramatized in The Sun Always Shines for the Cool which transpires in another closed setting, a bar. A harsh life of drugs, crime, violence, and death is accentuated. As in the prison, adherence to an honor code, this time among pimps, is one of the main concerns among otherwise desperate men and women. The bar is populated by ex-cons whose only source of income has been and is the women they exploit and dominate. While

the System is not directly to blame for this, these men exercise power and influence only within a sphere which is left to them by the majority culture. Their alienation and powerlessness are compounded by normlessness.

The primary dramatic focus centers around the conflict between Viejo, who has just been released from prison and who has a reputation for being "the Master of the Hustle," and Cat Eyes, a youngster who has also done time and is now making his way to the top in the pimp world. Chile Girl is a point of contention between these two since Viejo is her father, (which Cat Eyes discovers belatedly), and Cat Eyes wishes to convert her into his main whore. This problem is resolved during the climax when Viejo strips away Cate Eyes' outward appearances of masculinity and reveals him as an ex-prison whore who prostituted his own sister.

It becomes apparent that Viejo sees much of himself in Cat Eyes and realizes that he, Viejo, has lived a worthless existence. He is old, impotent, and not even recognized by his own daughter. Viejo's warning to Chile is "I ain't out to kill your man but to kill your would-be pimp."[11] In spite of his philosophizing, coolness, and outward appearance, Viejo is not better than Cat Eyes. His suicide at the play's end represents the supreme act of frustration rather than a statement on the future of the pimping profession.

The spectre of prison looms very real in the lives of all these men and women. Viejo demonstrates the controlled nature of his existence when he remarks, "I just got out and I'm trying to figure something out in my head for myself, first before I make any kind of moves in any direction that ain't considered legal by the state of New York."[12] To a woman, the prostitutes are presented as victimized people who have suffered at the hands of their most intimate relations. Satisfaction, for example, was first molested by her junior high school teacher. Phebe

was violated by her uncle at the age of eight and later by her father, while Rosa was exploited sexually and financially by her own brother. Their final destinies are the same due to human depravity and economic impotency. These two critical factors are at the center of the works of Carrero and Piñero in their efforts to understand and to dramatize man's inhumanity to man and to woman.

C. Lefty Barretto

Nobody's Hero by Manuel (Lefty) Barretto is an autobiographical account of maturation in the barrio. The narrative covers a crucial period in the protagonist's life which begins with his confinement to a preventorium in New Jersey and terminates as Barretto is leaving Riker's Island prison. His movement is between preventorium, barrio, and prison -- all three presented as closed environments which accentuate the cultural estrangement of Nuyorican youth. Street gangs and narcotics are two important factors in Barretto's particular situation.

As in the works of Jaime Carrero and Miguel Piñero, Lefty Barretto portrays the barrio as an environment of crime, violence, and drugs which is populated by many desperate people. Due to the narrative technique Barretto's view is more personal than the one offered by his counterparts. The prison, welfare, and school systems all receive critical scrutiny as well as inequities and discrimination in the work force.

The Barretto family are jíbaros from Santurce who are seeking "mucha oportunidad en Nueva York" which is equated with "trabajo" and "mucho dinero." The reality in the city is quite different however and all that remains is a nostalgic view of the homeland." Puerto Rico was the Eden of my childhood, my tropical manger. It is a garden where the season is never winter, and you cannot help but see the artist's hand in the nature that surrounds you."[13] Puerto Rico/Borinquén is elevated to the level of myth by Barretto and a majority of Nuyorican writers who

treat the topic. This positive image changes drastically for young Barretto though as he becomes more aware of people mired in poverty. The mother of his friend, Mikie, is a case in point: "For a moment I felt great pity for the little Borinquén lady whose house was always full of wild kids, but it passed. We were all too young to understand that it was the circumstance of poverty itself that gradually killed her."[14] The culture of the poverty syndrome becomes more apparent as Lefty participates in the street culture and progressively sinks into a quagmire of dope and despair.

Barretto is a failure not only because he does not chart a clear course for his own destiny, but also because of the makeup of certain institutions such as the school, welfare, and prison systems. Institutional racism coupled with discrimination is a factor in his destiny. Indicative of this tendency is the situation in which Manuel decides to apply for a job:

> At the agency when my turn to get an application came, I was told there were no more openings. All the cats who had gone before me copped an application. And, all those who came after me too. If they were white, that is.[15]

Awareness of such a situation eventually leads to despair, estrangement, and a lack of self confidence with <u>tecata</u> (dope) as the ultimate solution to economic, social and emotional problems. Lefty views the narcotics/jail pattern during adolescence from a deterministic perspective:

> As if a command had been given from above, everybody had gone sociable. That meant dropping out of school, getting a job and buying your own vines. And then finally giving on the skag because there was nothing else to do; so I followed the pattern.[16]

It is precisely at this juncture in the narrative that Lefty begins his downhill slide. Even gainful employment is not satisfactory since the choice of jobs is limited:

> They say trabajo, but they mean be a slave. Be a slave and feel good because you get to walk on the same rug the boss walks on. Forget about where you go home to at night. Live for the weekend. Come home exhausted as a zombie every week night. Man, I saw a big difference between work and slavery.[17]

Within this social and environmental context, Barretto's escape into the world of drugs is understandable but not condonable.

Nobody's Hero is a tough look at the Nuyorican world of gangs, delinquency, drugs and prisons. Barretto's narrative raises the crucial question of what is the future of youth under existing social and economic circumstances? The outcome of this autobiography is not very encouraging since it serves to demonstrate the cyclicality of the type of existence carried out by Lefty Barretto. He suggests that many people will emulate his actions in the future but unfortunately the majority will not live to write about it.

D. Nicholasa Mohr

The interpretation of Nuyorican life on the Lower East Side which is presented by Nicholasa Mohr in In Nueva York is, perhaps, not as severe as the vision portrayed by the previous writers in this study. The novelistic threads are held together by Old Mary and her family as well as activities surrounding Rudi's lunchonette. On a human level, the book is concerned with the process of acculturation of Chiquitín and Lali, new arrivals from Puerto Rico. In Nueva York's political dimension is expressed in the character's reactions to institutions such as welfare, schooling, and the economic system that keeps them submerged in poverty. The novel's ironic basis is revealed in the clash between aspirations and achievements: "In Nueva York, they said, the wages were high and opportunities greater."[18] The discrepancy is exemplified in the figure of Old Mary who contrasts herself with movie stars surmising that "they never worked like mules, like me, eh? Never went hungry and cleaned toilets for a living. That's for sure."[19] Survival is the key word as personified in Old Mary and symbolized by the yellow Alley Cat who are both

recurring figures in the novel.

A female perspective surrounding drugs and jail is realized through Yolanda who is just out of prison for drugs and prostitution and unsuccessfully undergoing psychiatric therapy. Yolanda receives the benefits of most of the social service agencies that have grown up around the conditions pof poverty. She remarks:

> My probation officer is a pretty nice woman; she's trying to get me into a school-work program. This way I can make some bread. You know, under one of the anti-poverty programs. And like I told her, I have been a poverty program all my life, right? So what else is new?[20]

Yolanda, it seems, has lost control of her destiny to anonymous officaldom. Her statement to the effect that, "I have been a poverty program all my life," sums up the life's chances of people who are born into a situation of economic dependency.

The overt political manifestations surrounding the migration and the immigration of peoples from the Caribbean are exemplified by Diego Torres, a Dominican, who is trying to learn English. Torres is determined not to become a U.S. citizen in spite of his lack of a future at home. He remarks, "I come here, pero I cannot help. I got no work at home. There is political. The United States control most the industry which is sugar and tourism. . .Someday we gonna run our own country and be jobs for everybody."[21] The fifteen-week English class is revealing in social terms in that the Polish fellow, Stephan Paczkowski, is perceived as mastering the language better and as being more ambitious than his Hispanic cohorts. In Miss Hamna's class, the victim is again blamed for his own shortcomings.

In Nueva York presents the aspirations, achievements, disillusionments, and imperfections of a segment of the lower East Side community. Nicholasa Mohr does seem to have more faith in human nature than her male counterparts. Lali and Chiquitín appear to be adjusting to New York life in a positive sense after

undergoing significant tests of character. After all, Old Mary and the Alley Cat are living symbols that attest to the fact that the strong survive.

E. Tato Laviera

La Carreta Made a U-Turn, as the title suggests, is an ironic allusion to La Carreta, the 1953 play by René Marqués, which portrays three phases in the trajectory of a Puerto Rican family - from the countryside to San Juan to New York and back home. The emphasis in Laviera's book is why the carreta made its u-turn. The poems are divided under three subheadings: "Metropolis Dreams;" "Loisaida Streets: Latinas Sing;" and "El Arrabal: Nuevo Rumbón." The last of these sections deals with the importance of music and rhythm in the black experience. "Loisaida Streets" is dedicated to many facets of the life of the Puerto Rican woman. "Metropolis Dreams" consists of thirteen poems treating the Nuyorican experience. They are: "para ti, mundo bravo;" "even then he knew;" "frío;" "a tight touch;" "my graduation speech;" "angelito's eulogy in anger;" "a speech outside the jail;" "excommunication gossip;" "subway song;" "something i heard;" "against muñoz pamphleteering;" "the last song of neruda;" and "fighting." Two of these selections are sufficient to demonstrate Laviera's attitude.

The basic concern in "Metropolis Dreams are the physical environment, social conditions, and the lack of a future for many people. Laviera also examines linguistic and cultural dualism as well as the human response to having to accept imposed values. "Even then he knew" is thematically representative of the first tendency.

papote sat on the stoop
a social club plays che che cholé
a pentecostal church sings hallelujah
the sunday garbage three days old
a burned car
yards full of junk an addition center
drunks on every empty milk box
velloneras parties screams
firecrackers
air infected with summer heat
junkies of all kinds all ages[22]

Papote is a barrio observer who perceives most aspects of the surrounding social, religious, and physical realities. Sights, sounds, and smells reflect the spiritual and physical decadence. The toll in human terms is high with drunks and junkies among the abandoned buildings and the air "infected with summer heat." These negative images persis throughout the poem:

papote sat on the stoop
puerto rican flags for patches in the asses
political prisoners posters destroyed
no stars no skies no room to breathe
papote sat on the stoop
miseducated misformed
a blown-up belly of malnutrition
papote sat on the stoop
of an abandoned building
he decided to go nowhere

The reiteration of "papote sat on the stoop" emphasizes the lack of a future for him and his people who are enroute to nowhere. This is due to political, educational, and economic phenomena. After all Papote is suffering from miseducation, misinformation, and malnutrition in a society where so much emphasis is placed upon health and progress.

The persistent Puerto Rican push for independence is exemplified in the "puerto rican flags" and "political prisoners" but for Papote their impact is not great since the emblems are used for "patches in the asses" and the "posters are destroyed." The New York environment itself is stiffling with "no stars," "no skies," and "no room to breathe."

"My Graduation Speech" describes the linguistic confusion of a person who is miseducated in two languages, English and Spanish. The poem alternates between English, Spanish, and what the author calls "Spanglish." "i think in Spanish/ i write in english" sets the tone of the poem. The narrator is convinced that he is "tonto in both languages" with the resultant mode of expression:

> english or spanish
> spanish or english
> spanenglish
> now, dig this:
>
> hablo lo ingles matao
> hablo lo español matao
> no sé leer ninguno bien
>
> so it is, spanlish to matao
> what i digo
> ¡ay, virgen, yo no sé hablar![23]

This poem reflects cultural confusion extended to verbal expression. It is ironic in that a graduation speech should demonstrate competency in acquired skills rather than ignorance.

In La Carreta Made a U-Turn as well as in the other works discussed here, the authors express extreme displeasure with the society of which they form a part. There is a correlation between the finding of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights enumerated at the beginning of this study in regard to income, education, unemployment, and poverty and the world views of Nuyorican dramatists, autobiographers, novelists, and poets. Carrero, Piñero, Barretto, Mohr, and Laviera are unaminous in their portrayal of a human condition in desperate need of improvement.

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NOTES

[1]Puerto Ricans in the United States: An Uncertain Future (Washington: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1976), p. 21.

[2]ibid, p. 146.

[3]The Chicago Sun Times, February 19, 1978, p. 3.

[4]University of Massachusetts, 1978.

[5]MELUS, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Fall 1978), 82-99.

[6]Jaime Carrero, Noo Jork (Gary: Revista Chicano-Riqueña, 1974), p. 8.

[7]ibid, p. 15.

[8]ibid, p. 15.

[9]ibid, p. 17.

[10]Jaime Carrero, The FM Safe in Nuevos Pasos: Chicano and Puerto Rican Drama, eds. Nicolás Kanellos and Jorge Huerta (Gary: Revista Chicano-Riqueña, 1979), p. 127.

[11]ibid, p. 118.

[12]ibid, p. 201.

[13]ibid, p. 186.

[14]Lefty Barretto, Nobody's Hero: A Puerto Rican Story (New York: Signet Books, 1976), p. 21.

[15]ibid, p. 77.

[16]ibid, p. 130.

[17]ibid, p. 131.

[18]ibid, p. 212.

[19]Nicholasa Mohr, In Nueva York (New York: The Dial Press, 1977), p. 12.

[20]ibid, p. 23.

[21]ibid, p. 46.

[22]ibid, pp. 56-7.

[23]Tato Laviera, La Carreta Made a U-Turn (Gary: Arte Público Press, 1979), p. 4.

[24]ibid, p. 7.